

EUROPEAN COMMUNISM "RE-STALINIZES"

In the Wake of Poland and Hungary

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THE Polish-Hungarian upheaval last autumn destroyed a number of illusions, notably the belief that "world Communism" is a monolith. If the Soviet leaders did not know it then, they must be aware by now that a considerable difference in outlook divides the Asian Communist parties from organizations tinctured, however faintly, by the traditions of the labor movement. Not a single party belonging to the former group was seriously embarrassed by the 1956 "October revolution"—or for that matter by Khrushchev's revelations about Stalin eight months earlier—while throughout Europe and the Americas these events gave Communism the worst shock it has suffered since the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939 and the purge of 1936-38 which preceded and led up to it.

Any discussion of the partial re-Stalinization currently in progress ought to start from a recognition of these facts, however embarrassing they may be to "One World" enthusiasts, or to proponents of that "Meeting of East and West" which we are sometimes told is essential to the spiritual health of our civilization. There is little to be gained, for example, from an analysis of Peking's reaction to the original de-Stalinization cam-

paign and its unexpected sequel in Eastern Europe. These matters are important to students of Sino-Soviet relations, but they have small relevance to the subject of the *crise de conscience* which Communism in the Western world has undergone during the past year. In China, there has been no *crise de conscience*, for the good and sufficient reason that Chinese Communism is only now entering its Stalinist phase, and consequently has nothing to react against. Mao Tse-tung and his colleagues are Stalinists by instinct and conviction, because Stalinism happens to be the only form of Communism that is applicable to China. And what is true of them is equally true of Communists in other Asian countries, insofar as they have any hope of winning power. For all of them it is a case of Stalinism or nothing.

Both de-Stalinization and re-Stalinization, then, are issues which do not really affect the land mass to the east of the USSR, for all that Chou En-lai, and even Mao Tse-tung, now take a personal interest in the welfare of Poland and Hungary (why should they not, if the Soviet leaders persist in making tours of India and Burma?). One must get away from the notion, which at one time bemused even Tito, that Sino-Soviet political rivalries can be raised to the ideological level. This could happen only if the USSR were to make a genuine break with Stalinism, along the lines now being tried out in Poland. While Gomulka's friends continue to assure themselves that eventually this is going to happen, even the most optimistic among them do not pretend to believe that it will come about in the near future. If the Polish "thaw" ever affects the great frozen ally to the east, it will do so after a considerable interval, and not without

THE Kremlin's de-Stalinization campaign was brought to a bloody close by the Hungarian revolution, and since then we have been witnessing an attempt by the Russian leaders to "re-Stalinize" the Communist parties both inside and outside the Soviet orbit. G. L. ARNOLD here considers the extent to which this attempt has succeeded. A former editor of the *Twentieth Century* in London and the author of *The Patterns of World Conflict* (1955), Mr. Arnold has been a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY. Readers will recall his article "The Dilemmas of Western Aid to Free Asia" in our issue of August 1955.

serious trouble. Meanwhile, the tendency is all in the opposite direction. Why then waste time speculating over the possible effect on Asia of a trend which, at the moment, is none too pronounced even in Europe? World Communism is a monolithic bloc only in the imagination of the political theologians who have taken charge of the cold war—the same people who dream of a fruitful encounter between the "materialism" of the West and the untapped "spiritual resources" of the Near and Far East: those resources which most educated Near and Far Easterners would give anything (even their liberties) to get rid of.

II

IF ONE ignores these ideological fantasies one is left with the question how far the current re-Stalinization has gone, and what sort of relationship can be expected to develop between the Soviet Communist party and the Communist movements of Eastern and Western Europe.

It is now a commonplace that the de-Stalinization campaign in the USSR was brought to a halt by the Polish-Hungarian "October," at any rate in the form which it had assumed in the months immediately following Khrushchev's notorious address to the 20th Congress. The seal was placed on the new orientation last January by none other than Khrushchev himself, in his appeal to the deity to make all Communists behave like Stalin "when it comes to fighting against imperialism." But already a week before this notable tribute to the man whom ten months earlier he had branded a mass murderer, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (January 12), in an article significantly headlined "How Do We Interpret Proletarian Internationalism?" had informed its readers that Stalin was the outstanding Leninist of his generation. "There has never been any 'Stalinism' in the Communist parties [sic]. All these parties develop and act in accordance with the immutable principles of Marxism-Leninism."

Nor was this an isolated comment. The new line had already been proclaimed by *Pravda* on December 26, in an editorial

which bluntly linked "revisionism" with "national Communism" in Eastern Europe, then on the eve of the Polish elections which confirmed Gomulka's precarious hold on power: "Some comrades have misinterpreted the recent changes in the party line. . . . In the present situation, imperialist reaction mobilizes the entire arsenal of lies and calumnies for a fresh crusade against the Marxist-Leninist world-view. The reactionary press is full of lying phrases about a so-called national Communism, with the sole aim of misleading the toiling masses. Under the influence of this propaganda, and from an unwillingness or inability correctly to analyze current events, some wavering elements are abandoning Marxism-Leninism, or trying to revise it." In this connection *Pravda* also had something to say about certain people in Eastern Europe (read: Poland) who were trying to jettison such basic tenets of Leninism as the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leading role of the party, and so forth.

That the role of the party is indeed the crux of the matter has meantime been impressed upon Gomulka's supporters among the Communist and near-Communist intellectuals who last October helped him into the saddle, and who are now uncertain over the extent of the victory they won. Their dilemma has been sharpened by the discovery that the newly elected parliament, though safely packed with a Communist majority, is potentially capable of becoming a focus of popular emotions dangerous to the stability of the regime. It could, for example, throw the entire planning machine out of gear by proposing tax changes, or wage increases, which the overstrained economy cannot stand.

If the government turned these demands down—as it would have no alternative but to do—the resulting conflict could easily destroy Gomulka's popularity, on which, in the last resort, the delicate balance of political forces in Poland depends. Faced with this alarming prospect, even ex-Socialists like Professor Julian Hochfeld (who last fall told a large and distinguished London audience that Rosa Luxemburg's critique of

the Bolshevik dictatorship was the bible of every Socialist in Poland) have come to the conclusion that "socialist democracy" can only be practiced within the limits set by the untrammelled rule of the Communist party. For practical purposes, the Professor and his friends (as reported in the press) propose that parliament adopt a self-denying ordinance: "constructive" criticism of the government and the plan must aim at reinforcing both, never at displacing or upsetting them. This is not parliamentary democracy as understood in the West, though it is a little more than Franco grants to his tame Cortes (or Tito to his pseudo-parliament); but it is something that Dr. Salazar in Portugal, for example, thoroughly understands and approves of (leaving aside the ideological orientation which he cannot be expected to like).

NEEDLESS to say, even this castrated parliamentarism is heresy to the Kremlin, as is Gomulka's typically inconsistent solution of the allied problem of liberty of speech: academic freedom has been partly restored, and periodicals or books written by and for intellectuals are not subject to censorship—writers are merely "advised" not to print anything that might seriously upset Poland's relations with Russia. On the other hand, daily newspapers—i.e. those that reach the masses—are subject to political and ideological control, while the party organ *Trybuna Ludu* has been purged of its "revisionist" editors and staffed with Gomulka's closest personal adherents who follow every shift in his balancing act. This is pure Metternich: under the old unreformed pre-1848 regime in Germany, scientific studies and/or books and periodicals above a certain size and *avoids* (i.e., guaranteed not to come into the hands of the uneducated) were exempt from censorship, while everything below this level came under police control. Freedom of speech for the social elite, strict control over the "toiling masses": Gomulka has entered into the heritage of the Holy Roman Empire. Like his dynastic predecessors, he, too, is concerned to insulate

the restless students and their heretical professors from ordinary people who might conceivably misunderstand the stirring new doctrines now being preached in the universities. Unlike Stalin he does not shoot his critics, and unlike Khrushchev he does not even threaten them with loss of their jobs. He merely sees to it that their heresies are not preached to the unlettered plebs.

Whether this unstable balance can be transformed into something approximating more closely to the "socialist democracy" which Poland's rebellious intellectuals thought they had secured last autumn, before the Hungarian catastrophe opened their eyes to the limits of "de-Stalinization," is a question no one can answer at the moment. Plainly, the Kremlin does not think so. Whatever the political toleration extended, for good and sufficient reasons, to Gomulka, there is no tolerance in Moscow for the heresies propagated by his "revisionist" adherents. But tolerance for heresy—though not heresy itself—is precisely the hallmark of the Polish regime. Gomulka himself and his closest supporters have made it clear that they stand for Communist party dictatorship and all it implies—but they have no objection to dissident views being expressed as long as they remain politically harmless. Thus the official spokesman of the regime, Jerzy Morawski, in an article in the party organ *Nowe Drogi*, as early as last February warned "certain radical elements" that "even though they might think themselves in the forefront of progress . . . objectively their activity might favor alien forces . . . which would like us to return to the bourgeois system"; and this familiar formula has now become the theme of official party propaganda against the "revisionists."

But the debate so far remains at the theoretical level, much to the indignation of *Pravda*, and of the loyally Stalinist Bulgarian party organ which last March condemned "an invented national Communism," adding that "certain bourgeois writers in Poland, who conceal their anti-Marxist face behind the word socialism, have gone too far. They are not ashamed to equate Stalin-

ism with fascism." This presumably refers to the publication of some of Koestler's and Orwell's writings in Polish periodicals—*Communist* periodicals, as the term "Communism" is now understood by the "revisionists." (They are, of course, no longer Communists, any more than is Milovan Djilas, who recently in open court repudiated the term and described himself as a Socialist.)

So much for Poland, where the issue now lies between "revisionism" (read: democratic socialism) and the watered-down Leninism of the Central Committee, with the Bukharinist Gomulka in control (for how long?). The Polish issue is by far the most interesting from the theoretical viewpoint, but politically a stalemate has now been reached. The party continues to reign unchallenged, but how effective is it at the village level? Moscow seems to have some doubts on this subject, for *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (March 25) complained that the reorganized Communist youth organization in Poland has a very poor idea of its tasks, and that its leaders "make almost no mention of the ideological training of the members, or of the class struggle which exists in Poland." These criticisms are probably well grounded. The Polish regime continues to be dictatorial, but it is no longer fully totalitarian. Yet at the ideological level the façade of Communist unity is maintained by the regime's official spokesmen. The concept of "national Communism" is loyally denounced as "erroneous and absurd," on the question-begging grounds that "Communism is the ideology of the international revolutionary movement, and cannot be confined within the framework of one nation."

This is almost, though not quite, on a par with Kadar's recent discovery (during a visit to Moscow) that national Communism is "the late-born twin brother of Hitlerite National Socialism." The remark was clearly aimed at the Yugoslavs, but it indirectly hit the Polish "revisionists" as well. No wonder Gomulka and Morawski hastened to disown these allies, while unofficially tolerating their vaporings in the

privileged semi-controlled sector of the press. If this precarious balance shifts in one direction or the other, it will be owing to political factors over which the dissident intellectuals have small control.

III

HUNGARY is a different kettle of fish altogether. Here the Stalinists are back in power, minus Rakosi, Gerö, and a handful of others who have become the official scapegoats for last October's upheaval. The Kadar regime is not merely orthodox itself: it also refuses to tolerate heresy. Such discussion as goes on is limited to the question of why the party failed to get the "counter-revolution" under control before it burst into the open. Here a slight difference of opinion manifests itself between such orthodox stalwarts as the former cultural dictator, Joseph Revai, and the propagandists of the Kadar regime who are anxious to present themselves as reformed characters. In an article on "Ideological Purity" in the Budapest *Nepszabadsag* on March 7, which promptly drew an official rebuttal, Revai put all the blame on the "revisionist" intellectuals who last year began to assail the party dictatorship, thus preparing the ground for the October rising. He also protested against the current tendency to repudiate the entire "achievement" of the 1944-56 period, when the Stalinist dictatorship turned Hungary upside down and inside out.

But what is really noteworthy about the present climate of official Communist opinion in Hungary is not Revai's partial re-emergence after an interval of silence, but the form taken by the official rebuttal. Replying on Kadar's behalf to Revai in the same journal two weeks later, Dezso Nemes began by conceding almost the entire case against the "revisionists":

Comrade Revai pointed out publicly for the first time that the revisionist attack against the proletarian dictatorship started many months before the October events. The factional undermining work to disintegrate the forces of the party, the counter-revolutionary "preparatory work" of certain groups of writers and

journalists (Gyula Hay, Losonczy, Gimes, and their colleagues), the organizing of the October 23 demonstration, the explosion of the armed uprising, and the treason of the Imre Nagy government, were homogeneous processes.

Comrade Revai also strongly attacked the harmful symptoms of a conciliatory attitude towards revisionism, the overcoming of which is an important precondition of the development of the ideological struggle. It is a fact that a number of people wanted to get rid of the dogmatic mistakes through a conciliatory spirit towards revisionism. . . . Comrade Revai was correct in stating that in repudiating the mistakes of Rakosi's leadership we cannot allow the great achievements of the past twelve years to be obscured and slandered. . . .

After this wholesale acceptance of the Stalinist case, what was there left for Kadar's spokesman to say? The answer comes in a paragraph preceded by fulsome tributes to the reconstituted party leadership and its triumphant suppression of the "counter-revolution":

Party members and non-party supporters of socialism are faced with the shocking fact that the leadership of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' party, which had in its hands the whole direction of the party and the state, was unable to prevent the development of the counter-revolution or to organize its defeat. However sharply we emphasize, and with every right, the revisionist disintegration of the Imre Nagy-Losonczy group, its infamous part in the ideological preparation of the counter-revolution and the breaking of the socialist front, all this will not answer the question why the Central Committee was unable to mobilize the party and the working class to avert the danger.

INDEED it will not. And since the official propagandist is unable to furnish an answer to his own question, his article peters out in personal charges against Rakosi, plus a discreet reminder that "until the summer of 1953, Revai was a member of the Politburo and consequently also, though to a lesser extent, responsible for party policy, for the errors in economic policy, and for the violations of law, which were the most serious of all." Clearly, at this level nothing resembling a principled discussion is possible. One learns from the same article that by March 1956 Revai "stood up sharply

against the Rakosi leadership and demanded the introduction of the great moral reforms brought about by the 20th Party Congress" in the USSR. So Revai was an orthodox Khrushchevist, but Kadar and his friends are behind Khrushchev, too—indeed, they are his most loyal supporters on the international scene. What divides them from Rakosi is clear enough: he got them into trouble by overdoing the reign of terror. But they are Thermidorians without a doctrine:

One of the most important results of the debates raised by the Revai article . . . is that with regard to the decisive issue whether there was a "national revolution" in October, or counter-revolution, none of the critics disagrees with Revai's statement. We believe Comrade Revai's article also contributed to the settling of this question, and the article had a good stimulating effect on the development of the ideological discussion.

For an article headed "We Want Creative Discussion," this is a remarkably tame ending. If the October rising was counter-revolutionary, there really is nothing further to be said. Yet this conclusion runs counter not merely to the settled viewpoint of the Polish and Yugoslav "revisionists," but also to the known attitude of the Polish and Yugoslav governments: neither Gomulka nor Tito is likely—whatever they may say in public—to ignore the connection between "national Communism" and the "national revolution" which failed in Hungary. Their own regimes depend on the national element, insofar as it can be kept under Communist control, or amalgamated with what used to be known as "international Communism." For them it is a matter of life and death to keep "national Communism" going, though in their public utterances they may disclaim all such notions. Kadar has no such worries, but that is because he has burnt his bridges. Like his East German, Czech, Rumanian, and Bulgarian colleagues, he must be orthodox and "international" for want of popular support. Yet even Kadar must envy the uninhibited orthodoxy of Moscow's smallest and least distinguished satellite, Albania, whose leaders are probably the only completely

unreconstructed Stalinists left in Europe. For Enver Hoxha and Mehmet Shehu there never was any doubt that "the Soviet Union is the glorious leader of the socialist camp," as quoted in the *New York Herald Tribune* on April 12, and that its critics (notably Tito) are "revisionists and opportunists."

Such faith is becoming rare in the West, although the French Communists do their best to maintain the tradition. The French deputation, headed by the two Politburo members A. Fajon and Raymond Guyot, which visited Warsaw last January for "comradely discussions" with the new Polish leadership, is known to have staggered the Poles by its unflinching orthodoxy:

The only thing that seemed to interest them [said a Warsaw report quoting an unnamed Polish Communist spokesman who participated in the talks] was always to follow the Soviet example, without question if possible, and whether justified or not. . . . Every time they pronounced the words "Soviet Union" they adopted a melodramatic tone, and made a move as though they wanted to get up and salute. We could hardly believe that these people were Frenchmen.

They must have been shocked when (according to the same report, which was widely publicized in Paris after their return), one of the Polish delegates said: "Since October one cannot lie any more in Poland, and if the Socialist camp has to go on lying, so much the worse for it."

A GAINST this background it is not surprising that the French did not get all they hoped for when the time came to draft a joint communiqué. Their delegates wanted something on the lines of the previously published Franco-Czech statement, putting the emphasis on Soviet leadership and strongly condemning the Hungarian "counter-revolution," but the Poles balked at this. Eventually, the declaration contained only the old familiar platitudes about "imperialist aggression" and the "struggle for peace." General Speidel's appointment as head of a NATO command was duly condemned, and the Oder-Neisse frontier once more under-

written in the name of "the French working-class." The PUWP (Polish United Workers' party) gave its blessing to the French party's Algerian policy, and the French delegation in turn assured the PUWP of "the solidarity of the French Communists with its efforts aimed at the consolidation of socialism in Poland on the basis of the principles of Leninism"—a protestation of loyalty which was promptly followed by renewed attacks on Gomulka in the French Communist press.

By this time, however, the French Communist party's attention had switched to two other subjects: the danger of further Franco-German reconciliation (hence the fuss over Speidel) and the "opportunist" tendencies manifested by—Togliatti! For the French Communist party, though completely sterile intellectually, if we are to believe Jean-Paul Sartre's account "The Ghost of Stalin" (*Temps Modernes*, February 1957), considers itself the watchdog of ideological purity throughout Western Europe. By the time the Warsaw talks were under way, it had already begun to worry over certain alarming symptoms of "revisionism" on the farther side of the Alps. This concern found eloquent expression in a twenty-three-page article by Roger Garaudy in the January 1957 number of the official party organ *Cahiers du Communisme*. What upset the French Politburo was once more a manifestation of "national Communism," in this case the adoption by the Italian Communist party last December of a document stressing the "Italian Road to Socialism." This platform notably included proposals on the subject of nationalization which, to its French critics, sounded suspiciously like an attempt to rope in certain sections of the Italian middle class (as indeed they were intended to). Worse, the Italian party seemed to have become such a whole-hearted convert to constitutionalism, parliament, and peaceful evolution towards socialism, as to compromise its more intransigent French sister-party.

In rebutting these charges, the Italian party's theoretical journal, *Rinascita*, gave prominence to an unsigned article (believed to have been written by Togliatti himself)

which went so far in the direction of "reformism" as to confirm the worst suspicions of the French Politburo—notably in asserting the peaceful and democratic character of the "Italian Road to Socialism." Not that the Italian Communist party has dissociated itself from the armed Soviet intervention in Hungary: its refusal to do so has, on the contrary, provoked a considerable membership exit, and an open breach with Nenni's fellow-traveling Socialist party. But the "Italian Road to Socialism" does have certain "national" overtones, while its emphasis on "structural reforms" (acceptable to the middle class, and to be achieved through parliament) seems to point in the direction of a coalition government. So, of course, did the policy of the Czech party in 1945-48, before the Prague *coup d'état*. No Communist party really believes that dictatorship can or should be avoided, and Togliatti is merely being a better politician than the men who run the French party, with its frozen electoral following and its unique talent for sterile and murderous obstruction. Unlike them, he heads a party which still has some life in it. Not surprisingly, he wants to get out of the Stalinist impasse, even at the cost of keeping silent about Hungary, while the French CP—with nothing to lose, since it is by now wholly isolated from the rest of French society—can afford to be intransigent. Ideological purity at present constitutes almost its entire stock in trade; hence its reluctance to de-Stalinize: any move in this direction must discredit a leadership in whose name Jacques Duclos last December gave his complete support to the re-Stalinization campaign.

THE trouble with the French CP is not that it is machine-ridden, but that, to put it vulgarly, it is dead from the neck up. "A colossus with a head of clay" (the expression originally coined by European diplomatists to describe the Eisenhower administration) fits it to perfection. There is no room in it for a "loyal opposition" that could drag it out of its self-willed isolation, and despite current rumors that the Thorez-

Duclos leadership is on the way out, no immediate prospect of a split at the top that might give the "revisionists" a chance (if there are any—one sometimes suspects that the French CP is the last substantial body of True Believers in the Western world to have genuinely swallowed the Leninist-Stalinist myth).

Behind this apparent refusal to confront the issue of permanent minority status there lies, it is true, a political calculation. A party which cannot win power can nonetheless maintain its cohesion if it persuades a sufficient number of people to secede from the body politic. The French CP is a closed world which provides a substitute of normal social life for its functionaries and militants. As long as they are satisfied with this kind of existence, the leadership is safe and can spend its time waiting for some national or international catastrophe to occur. The same outlook, *mutatis mutandis*, characterizes the tiny British Communist party, whose membership is currently thought to have dropped to 25,000, from an all-time high of 85,000 shortly after the war, and an estimated 35,000 before the Hungarian upheaval. A further drop to some 20,000 hardened veterans seems likely, and is perhaps desired by the entrenched Stalinist leadership, which counts on its working-class following to make up for the numerous defections among intellectuals and fellow-travelers. The anti-Stalinist opposition, here as elsewhere, is largely confined to the section of the membership which stems from the middle and professional classes, and the loss of these adherents is viewed with cynical detachment by the leadership, which prefers 20,000 hard-core veterans to a slightly larger but less reliable following. True, no Communist party can operate successfully without the concourse of people outside the industrial working class, but provided it maintains a hard core of followers it can keep going indefinitely—though only as a sect divorced from the political and intellectual mainstream. This fate has already overtaken the British CP, and it is beginning to look increasingly likely that a similar

process will gradually erode the political strength of French Communism, as it has already led to the virtual disappearance of organized Communism in Western Germany. Time is certainly not on the side of these parties—to the postwar generation they appear not merely outlandish but slightly old-fashioned, and for a self-styled revolutionary movement that is the beginning of the end.

IV

IN SPITE of what has been said so far, none of the West European Communist parties has experienced the "de-Stalinization" and "re-Stalinization" issues in the form of an acute political crisis, for the good and sufficient reason that these parties are not in power. Stalinism is not just a mental framework but a system of government, and the dismantling of this system—as demonstrated in Poland and Hungary—is fraught with revolutionary dangers. In Poland, the issue was faced and temporarily settled by an unstable compromise; in Hungary, the revolution got out of control, and Stalinism had to be restored by force; the other East European satellites did not stir. This may suggest that the revolutionary elements are temporarily dormant there, or else that the "revisionists" among the leaders are biding their time. There is, however, one satellite which seems destined to have the tempo of its development determined by forces outside the Soviet orbit, having been artificially split off from a larger national whole.

East Germany is not just one of the half-dozen European countries occupied by the Soviet Army; it is also an organic part of Germany—still the largest and most dynamic nation in Europe, and a nation which is now getting back on its feet. The East German regime is thus in the peculiar position of having to fight for its political life on two fronts: internally, it must counter the insidious seduction of the Western way of life, as expressed in freedom and higher living standards; externally, it must continue to persuade the Kremlin that German unification is worth having only at the price of

continued Communist control east of the Elbe.

This complex game lends a certain interest to the otherwise drab and undistinguished political life of the so-called German Democratic Republic. The DDR, as it is contemptuously known to Germans in the Federal Republic (the initials stand for *Deutsche Demokratische Republik*, the official title of the Ulbricht regime), depends for its existence on the perpetuation of the political split which runs through the center of Europe. Few people believe that the split can endure; no one knows how it is to be ended. Both the USSR and the Western powers are officially committed to the thesis that it is merely temporary, yet neither side has gained the loyalty of those Germans who hanker above all after unification. This applies even to some among the East German Communists, and it is the only issue on which the anti-Stalinist opposition within the ruling Socialist Unity party (the title chosen by the East German CP) can conceivably ride into power.

Against this background, the efforts made from time to time by Ulbricht's opponents to displace him acquire more than passing significance, for Ulbricht represents that complete subordination to Soviet interests which in a satellite dictator is the hallmark of orthodoxy—that, and not personal adulation of Stalin: since Khrushchev's disclosures last year, Ulbricht, like his East European colleagues, has of course adopted the new line on this subject. What matters to the Russians is that he has never gone against Soviet policy. In 1945-53, he was the model Stalinist *Gauleiter* of his country; in 1953, after the Berlin riots, he introduced the "new deal" recommended by the Soviet ambassador, Semionov, which called for more consumer goods and an easing of tension; in 1954-55, with the supersession of Malenkov by Khrushchev, he obediently switched back to primacy for investments and exports to the USSR. Similarly in 1955, before and after the Geneva conference, he echoed the Khrushchev-Bulganin line on "peaceful coexistence" and the need for

Germans on both sides to get together, while in 1956 he put up the price of coexistence—again in conformity with the tactical requirements of Soviet foreign policy.

Such pliability is unique. It springs from a settled conviction that the East German regime can maintain itself only if it is fully trusted by the Russians; also from a realization that it is morally isolated. Gomulka was able to make contact with the Polish people when he decided to stand up to Russia; Ulbricht has no such choice, or rather, he made his choice a good many years ago when he decided to become the Kremlin's most faithful servant and to build his position upon this fact alone. Hence he is irreplaceable as long as the Russians are in control, but for the same reason he is vulnerable to the charge of blocking national unification. If Moscow could be brought to accept a unified and neutralized Germany, there would be no further room for him—and the number of Germans in the Eastern zone who would regret his departure on these terms is minute.

IT is only in the light of this complex entanglement that one can begin to make sense of the so-called Harich affair, which exploded with the arrest on November 29, 1956, of Professor Wolfgang Harich, a youthful but prominent SED (Socialist Unity party) functionary, and his subsequent condemnation to ten years imprisonment, on charges running all the way from factionalism to high treason. The publication by the West Berlin Social Democrats of "a memorandum written by Harich a few days before his arrest" (reprinted in part by the *Frankfurter Rundschau* on March 11, 1957, and since then published in various translations) had the effect of suddenly linking the issue of anti-Stalinist "revisionism" to the much more important and explosive one of resurgent German nationalism. For if Harich was at all representative of the anti-Stalinists in the SED, there seemed to be a chance of an East German Gomulka emerging from among Ulbricht's open and concealed opponents in the Communist *apparat*.

The Harich plan envisaged the gradual

transformation of the SED into a party which could cooperate, and eventually amalgamate, with the West German Social Democrats under the leadership of the latter, thus at long last bridging the political gap and providing the necessary basis of German unification. Its subversive character was not denied by the author, who frankly looked forward to the "withering away" of the East German regime. It is the more remarkable that Harich submitted this document to the Soviet ambassador, Pushkin, who promptly denounced it and him to the East German authorities. He was probably induced to take this step by a mixture of naivety and political calculation, the latter apparently based on his belief that a neutralized Germany under Socialist direction—the reformed Socialist coalition having swept all before it in the first free all-German elections—would become a trustworthy neighbor of the USSR, though not a satellite. From the standpoint of a left-wing Socialist, this expectation seemed both eminently reasonable and of a kind to commend itself to the Kremlin. The Harich plan in fact could be described as a German counterpart of Semionov's "new deal" in 1953, which had for its ultimate aim to turn a unified Germany into a genuine ally of the Soviet Union. If the Russians were primarily interested in the creation of a pacifist and neutralist Germany on their borders, they ought to have welcomed it—at least they should have kept Harich up their sleeves. Perhaps he is still regarded by them as a possible card in the complex game of German politics, but on present evidence his chances of emerging from jail in the near future are considerably worse than those of his Yugoslav counterpart, Milovan Djilas. It seems that the Soviet government is not really interested in the prospect of helping the Social Democrats unify a neutralized Germany (from which all NATO forces would have to be removed), if the price is the disappearance of the Ulbricht regime. For the dismantling of this loyal Stalinist satellite would certainly set up a chain reaction in East Europe, and ultimately perhaps in the USSR itself. De-Stalinization is

something that needs to be carefully controlled—that much the Kremlin has learned during the past year.

Politically, therefore, the Harich affair was a nine days' wonder, and by now it may have been forgotten, save by those German Communists who believe that it is possible to get rid of Ulbricht and yet keep a "purified" Communist party in being—to have their Leninist cake and eat it, in fact. Intellectually, the Harich memorandum is remarkable chiefly for its slightly old-fashioned tone. Its appeal for a return to orthodox Leninism, "complemented and broadened by taking account of the thought of Trotsky, and even more of Bukharin, of Rosa Luxemburg, and partly of Karl Kautsky," is so splendidly anachronistic as to suggest that the author may have led a Rip Van Winkle existence for the past quarter century; but then some of Gomulka's friends among the Polish Marxists likewise display a good deal of nostalgia for the intellectual atmosphere of the 30's. Alas, Ulbricht is no Gomulka. Instead of being allowed to write learned essays on Marxist theory for uncensored academic quarterlies, Harich is condemned to ordinary prison existence, and short of a successful anti-Stalinist rebellion in the DDR, he seems unlikely to emerge—always provided the Soviet line on German unification does not change overnight. If it does, Wolfgang Harich—ex-convert to Buddhism, and later to Roman Catholicism, before becoming a professed Communist zealot—may yet acquire a modest niche in history.

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THIS cursory survey of the re-Stalinization process, which succeeded last year's semi-abortive de-Stalinization campaign, has

been purposely confined to regions outside the USSR. An account of what has been happening lately in the Soviet Union would have to range over a very wide field—from philosophy to economics. Soviet society is a more complex subject than Communist party politics, which tend to be remarkably alike, whether the party in question represents a quarter of the national electorate or merely a handful of eccentrics. As matters stand, the observer of the scene has to register a temporary stalemate in the clash of warring tendencies let loose by the original dismantling of the Stalinist edifice. On balance, "world Communism" seems to have become slightly less monolithic, and even within Europe, over-all unity has been secured only at the cost of fairly substantial concessions to heretics and schismatics of various kinds.

If a distinct impression emerges it is that national traditions have retained an unsuspected power to influence the development of the supranational movement guided from Moscow. De-Stalinization has somehow or other become entangled with the issue of "national Communism," for all the Kremlin's efforts to prevent this confluence. The anti-Stalinists, from Gomulka to Djilas, appeal in varying degree to patriotic and democratic sentiments, and the more thoroughgoing "revisionists" have even come to believe that Communism and political democracy are compatible. This is an illusion, for "democratic Communism" is a slide at whose end stands democracy pure and simple; but it is an illusion which may yet carry a substantial number of disenchanted Communists into the democratic camp. If it does, the present ideological shambles in East Europe may turn out to have been more significant than a purely formal analysis of its intellectual structure would suggest.